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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/737,306	12/16/2003	Robert Haines Turner	9134R2	5964

27752 7590 02/03/2006

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EXAMINER

PIERCE, JEREMY R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1771

DATE MAILED: 02/03/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/737,306

Applicant(s)

TURNER ET AL.

Examiner

Jeremy R. Pierce

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 December 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-27 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)   | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Response to Amendment***

1. Applicant's amendment filed on December 22, 2005 has been entered. No amendment to the claims is made. Claims 1-27 remain pending.

### ***Claim Objections***

2. Claim 16 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. Claim 16 recites the same limitation as claim 10.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

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4. Claims 1-5, 8-12, 15-21, and 23-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Provost et al. (US 2004/0157036).

Provost et al. disclose a fibrous layer adjacent to a carrier sheet wherein the fibrous are needled through the carrier sheet to form loops on the other side (Abstract and Figures 2-4). The tufted fibers extend from a region exhibiting a linear orientation. With regard to the limitation throughout several claims that the fibrous layer has random orientation with respect to the X-Y plane, Applicant has defined this limitation to include carded nonwoven webs in the Specification. Provost et al. use a carded layer of fibers (paragraph 11), so the fibrous layer meets the random orientation limitation. With regard to claim 3, the regions can be uniformly distributed (see Figure 9). Provost et al. use a carded layer of fibers (paragraph 11), so the fibrous layer meets the random orientation limitation. With regard to claims 8 and 15, there are at least 10 discrete regions per square centimeter (paragraph 38). With regard to claim 9, an open void area is seen between the loops (Figure 3D). With regard to claim 21, the film meets the limitations of the second layer.

5. Claims 1-5, 10-12, 16-21, and 23-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Tranfield (U.S. Patent No. 3,684,284).

Tranfield discloses a fabric wherein a fibrous batt of randomly oriented thermoplastic fibers is needled through an adjacent layer of knitted cotton to form tufts on the other side of the knitted fabric (column 3, lines 22-38 and Figures 6-7). Discrete regions are formed wherein a portion of fibers are disposed substantially perpendicular

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to the pile surface penetrating through the layers of knitted fabric (column 3, lines 45-50).

6. Claims 1-6, 8, 10-13, 15-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Sorimachi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,508,080).

Sorimachi et al. teach a laminated material wherein filaments of a web are penetrated through a nonwoven fabric (Abstract). The web has a random orientation in the X-Y plane because it is formed from entangled fibers (column 3, lines 54-56) and no particular orientation is described. Needling creates discrete portions of fibers extending towards the nonwoven fabric in a uniform fashion, as can be seen in the Drawings. With regard to claims 5, 12, and 23, various thermoplastic fibers are used (column 3, lines 54-56). With regard to claims 6 and 13, bicomponent fibers may be used (column 8, lines 14-16). With regard to claims 8 and 15, there are at least 10 discrete regions per square centimeter (column 4, line 35).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 7 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sorimachi et al. in view of Kotek et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,120,718).

Sorimachi et al. teach fibers may be hollow in order to provide a voluminous texture (column 8, lines 13-15), but fail to teach the fibers to be non-round. Kotek et al. disclose that higher void volume may be achieved with hollow fibers that are lobal (column 1, lines 32-45). It would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use non-round fibers in Sorimachi et al. in order to increase bulk, as taught to be known by Kotek et al.

### ***Double Patenting***

9. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

10. Claims 1-27 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 and 3-15 of copending Application No. 10/737,235. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because both sets of claims are directed to a fibrous article comprising similar longitudinal orientations of fibers in discrete areas in one layer with similar dependent claims.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

11. Claims 1-27 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1, 4, 6-12, and 14-30 of copending Application No. 10/737,307. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the '307 Application is directed to a similar two layer fibrous article with areas of discrete tufts and differing properties between the layers.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

12. Claims 1-27 are provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-20 of copending Application No. 10/737,430. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because both sets of claims are directed to a fibrous article comprising similar longitudinal orientations of fibers in discrete areas in one layer with similar dependent claims.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

13. Claims 1-27 provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-44 of copending Application No. 10/737,640. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the '640 Application also

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claims a fibrous web with discrete areas of fibers having linear orientation in the direction of tufts formed.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

### ***Response to Arguments***

14. Applicant's arguments filed December 22, 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

15. Applicant argues that Provost fails to disclose "at least one portion being a discontinuity exhibiting a linear orientation defining a longitudinal axis." However, Applicant fails to assert how this claim limitation establishes any sort of structure that is distinct from the material of Provost et al. One can clearly see a discontinuity exhibiting a linear orientation defining a longitudinal axis in Figure 2D of Provost et al., for instance.

16. Applicant argues that Provost fails to disclose a web having a deformation that "comprises fibers integral with but extending from the first region and fibers neither integral with nor extending from the first region." However, the claims fail to set forth any definite boundaries as to where the first region ends and the second regions begin. Taking the material of Provost et al., one could easily draw a boundary line around a discontinuous tufted region so that the discontinuity would comprise fibers that extend from the first region and would also comprise fibers that neither extend nor are integral from the first region.



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17. Applicant argues that Tranfield fails to disclose “at least one portion being a discontinuity exhibiting a linear orientation defining a longitudinal axis.” However, Applicant fails to assert how this claim limitation establishes any sort of structure that is distinct from the material of Tranfield. Tranfield teaches the fibers are disposed substantially perpendicular to the pile surface penetrating through the layers of knitted fabric (column 3, lines 45-50). If the fibers are aligned perpendicular to the pile surface, then they must have a discontinuity exhibiting a linear orientation defining a longitudinal axis.

18. Applicant argues that Tranfield fails to disclose a web having a deformation that “comprises fibers integral with but extending from the first region and fibers neither integral with nor extending from the first region.” However, the claims fail to set forth any definite boundaries as to where the first region ends and the second regions begin. Taking the material of Tranfield, one could easily draw a boundary line around a discontinuous tufted region so that the discontinuity would comprise fibers that extend from the first region and would also comprise fibers that neither extend nor are integral from the first region.

19. Applicant argues that Sorimachi fails to disclose “at least one portion being a discontinuity exhibiting a linear orientation defining a longitudinal axis.” However, Applicant fails to assert how this claim limitation establishes any sort of structure that is distinct from the material of Sorimachi. Sorimachi et al. teach a laminated material wherein filaments of a web are penetrated through an adjacent nonwoven fabric layer (Abstract). In order for the fibers to penetrate through an adjacent layer when they are

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otherwise oriented in the X-Y plane, then they must have a discontinuity exhibiting a linear orientation defining a longitudinal axis.

20. Applicant argues that Sorimachi fails to disclose a web having a deformation that “comprises fibers integral with but extending from the first region and fibers neither integral with nor extending from the first region.” However, the claims fail to set forth any definite boundaries as to where the first region ends and the second regions begin. Taking the material of Sorimachi, one could easily draw a boundary line around a discontinuous tufted region so that the discontinuity would comprise fibers that extend from the first region and would also comprise fibers that neither extend nor are integral from the first region.

21. Applicant argues that Kotek et al. fails to remedy the shortcomings of Sorimachi. However, the Examiner does not believe Sorimachi to be deficient with respect to the independent claim limitations.

### ***Conclusion***

22. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any

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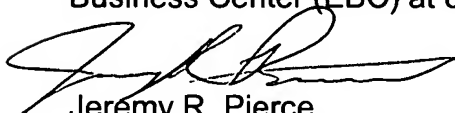
extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

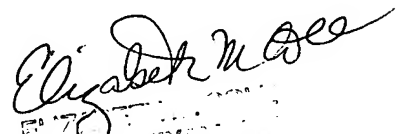
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeremy R. Pierce whose telephone number is (571) 272-1479. The examiner can normally be reached on normal business hours, but works flextime hours.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Terrel Morris can be reached on (571) 272-1478. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic

Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

  
Jeremy R. Pierce  
January 31, 2006

  
Elizabeth M. Lee  
EBC  
JAN 31 2006